

Brussels, 19 June 2026
(OR. en)

9843/26
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LIMITE

CORLX 539
CFSP/PESC 798
COTER 80
CONOP 30
CONUN 97
COARM 102

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	COUNCIL DECISION on Union support for the universalisation and effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) - Annex

PROJECT DOCUMENT

Union support for the universalization and effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism

Background

In 2005, the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) by the United Nations General Assembly marked a significant milestone in strengthening the international legal framework for nuclear security. The Convention has 127 States parties as of March 2026.

ICSANT is one of the 19 international legal instruments against terrorism. It is essential for international peace and security to effectively prevent and combat terrorist or other criminal conduct involving nuclear or other radioactive material. Becoming a party is only the first necessary step and effective implementation (legislative and technical) is also key. ICSANT requires adopting national implementing legislation that ensures that all obligations set forth in the Convention are adequately transposed. This provides comprehensive legal coverage for crimes involving nuclear or other radioactive material, including terrorist acts, as well as mechanisms to prevent, detect and respond to such conduct. The Convention is instrumental in enhancing the international nuclear security architecture, and the goal of reaching universal adherence entails continuous efforts in order to ensure there are no safe havens for alleged perpetrators.

In this context, the first and second projects supporting universalization and effective implementation of ICSANT (January 2019 to June 2023 and July 2023 to June 2026, respectively), represent an important multilateral security partnership between the European Union and the United Nations that serves to address the threat of nuclear terrorism and other criminal conduct involving nuclear or other radioactive material.

The prevention, detection and suppression of criminal conduct by non-State actors involving nuclear or other radioactive material requires a robust national legal framework, for which ICSANT is a key basis. Its universalization and effective implementation continue to be a high priority for the international community.

Project rationale

Twenty years after its adoption, ICSANT remains highly relevant not only for States possessing nuclear material or operating nuclear power programmes, but also for all other countries, as the Convention covers a wide range of radioactive materials commonly used in medicine, industry, agriculture and research. This broad scope underscores that no State is exempt from the risks associated with the potential misuse of such materials. For this reason, it is essential to continue promoting and supporting the universalization of ICSANT, and to place strong emphasis on its effective implementation. Demonstrating the concrete benefits of both joining and effectively implementing the Convention remains key to strengthening global nuclear security. In this context, the European Union and the United Nations will once again partner in a new project on *Supporting the universalization and effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism*, further reinforcing collective efforts to address the persistent and evolving threats involving nuclear or other radioactive material.

Project Goal

The project will support the universalization and a greater and more effective implementation of ICSANT, through stronger and coherent national legal frameworks and robust capacity-building.

Project Duration

1 July 2026 – 30 June 2029 (36 months)

Project Geographical Scope

Global, regional, national

Project Approach

This project will be implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB), through its CBRN Terrorism Prevention Programme, and by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), through its United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Use of Weapons, and in close collaboration with relevant field offices as well as international and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate. This includes, among others, the Delegations of the European Union, the European Union CBRN Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (EU CBRN CoE) Initiative, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the United Nations Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and its Group of Experts.

The project will be divided into two components, each to be implemented by UNODC and by UNOCT/UNCCT respectively, in accordance with their respective mandates and expertise. This will result in some outputs and activities being implemented by UNODC, while others will be implemented by UNOCT/UNCCT. In some cases, both entities will be involved.

The project will build on the activities delivered and tools developed under Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1939 of 10 December 2018 and Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/1187 of 19 June 2023. It will be conducted in line with the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, the EU Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy and the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/RES/60/288) and other United Nations General Assembly resolutions (e.g., A/RES/78/226). Existing international human rights norms and standards will be integrated into the project.

The project will be implemented in a gender sensitive manner, with gender perspectives mainstreamed throughout the project. The project will promote gender perspectives and integrate gender dimension in its methodology and, to the extent possible, ensure equal opportunities for female and male officials to participate in all project events, underlining the benefits of inclusion of female public servants in the national institutions. All feedback collected from pre- and post-workshop surveys and tests will be disaggregated by gender, to ensure the project is able to capture and report on the perspective of female officials. Project indicators will collect and report data disaggregated by gender.

Project Outcomes

Outcome 1: Increased number of States considering/initiating processes/becoming parties to ICSANT and heightened awareness and knowledge of ICSANT, including relevant human rights aspects of it, among beneficiaries (national policy and decision makers, including parliamentarians) and in international fora. Complementarities with other relevant international legal instruments (CPPNM, A/CPPNM, UNSC resolution 1540) are exploited as appropriate.

Outcome 2: Improved national legislation and capacity of criminal justice officials and other relevant national stakeholders in beneficiary countries to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate cases in which ICSANT would apply.

Outcome 3: Enhanced policies, practices, and procedures to prevent, detect and respond to the threat of non-State actors, including terrorists, acquiring, possessing and/or using nuclear or other radioactive material and improved knowledge and understanding of the threat of radiological and nuclear terrorism and other criminal conduct involving such materials.

Outcome 4: Enhanced national and international cooperation, including information exchange, within and among States parties in devising and adopting effective and practical measures to effectively implement the Convention.

Project Outputs and Activities

Outcome 1: Increased number of States considering/initiating processes/becoming parties to ICSANT and heightened awareness and knowledge of ICSANT, including relevant human rights aspects of it, among beneficiaries (national policy and decision makers, including parliamentarians) and in international fora. Complementarities with other relevant international legal instruments (CPPNM, A/CPPNM, UNSC resolution 1540) are exploited as appropriate.

Output 1.1: The importance of universalization and effective implementation of ICSANT, through visibility and advocacy is promoted

Activity 1.1.1: ICSANT 20th anniversary high-level event (UNODC)

UNODC will organize and deliver a high-level event to be co-hosted with the EU and Canada in Vienna to mark the 20th anniversary of the entry into force of ICSANT in 2027 which will 1) serve as the *de facto* meeting of States parties and be an indispensable forum to discuss global and national implementation, including challenges and progress so far, and international cooperation under the Convention, as well as human rights considerations under ICSANT and gender perspectives; 2) encourage States not yet party to consider adherence; 3) chart the path forward towards universalization and effective implementation of ICSANT.

Activity 1.1.2: Visibility, advocacy and contribution to ICSANT-related events hosted by other organizations (UNODC/UNOCT)

Within their respective mandates and as appropriate, UNODC and UNOCT/UNCCT will contribute their expertise and promote ICSANT, together with the activities implemented under this project, in relevant international fora, including events related to or organized by:

- international legal frameworks, including, but not limited to, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment, United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;
- international organizations, including, but not limited to, IAEA, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), UNICRI, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), UNODA, the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (OLA);
- civil society, including non-governmental organizations;
- international initiatives including, but not limited to, the EU CBRN CoE, the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the Nuclear Threat Initiative and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

Output 1.2: Adherence to ICSANT and synergies and complementarities with other relevant international legal instruments are promoted and increased

Activity 1.2.1: Cabinet memoranda (UNODC)

Based on UNODC's extensive experience in preparing cabinet memoranda that have led to/are advancing adherence to ICSANT, UNODC will prepare a model cabinet memorandum for States considering adherence to ICSANT to have as a reference. It will be published on UNODC's website. UNODC will further assist requesting States with tailor-made draft cabinet memoranda. These memoranda are detailed documents addressing the specific situation and needs of the countries in order to support the relevant ministries and other relevant stakeholders advocating for adherence to ICSANT with decision-makers.

Outcome 2: Improved national legislation and capacity of criminal justice officials and other relevant national stakeholders in beneficiary countries to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate cases in which ICSANT would apply.

Output 2.1: Legislative assistance to requesting States is provided

Activity 2.1.1: Relevant legislative assistance to give effect to ICSANT provisions and enable application of the law by frontline officers, law enforcement, prosecutors, the judiciary and any other relevant stakeholders (UNODC)

UNODC will provide relevant legislative assistance to requesting States (party or not yet party to ICSANT) via desk reviews and online national drafting workshops, upon request and as appropriate, building upon the joint UNODC-IAEA model criminalization provisions against nuclear terrorism, UNODC's Manual on Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition and UNODC's Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool, good practices identified through UNODC's compilation of national implementing legislation of article 2 of ICSANT, as well as tools developed by UNODC under previous Council Decisions and other complementary projects.

Output 2.2: The capacity of national criminal justice systems to prevent, detect, suppress, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate ICSANT-related offences is enhanced

Activity 2.2.1: National seminars for judicial education and training centres (UNODC)

UNODC will organize five (5) national seminars in States already party to ICSANT for criminal justice officials at judicial education or other relevant training centres in order to enhance their capacity to effectively implement ICSANT and raise awareness *vis-à-vis* the Convention. The seminars, *inter alia*, will rely on the manual on fictional cases under ICSANT and other materials developed by UNODC under previous Council Decisions, and will apply a train-the-trainer methodology in order to ensure sustainability. If online delivery of any of the seminars is deemed more effective in any country, the number of national seminars could be increased, subject to availability of resources.

Output 2.3: UNODC ICSANT website is maintained, regularly updated, enhanced and further developed

Activity 2.3.1: ICSANT website (UNODC)

UNODC will maintain, regularly update, enhance and further develop the website in all UN official languages. The UNODC ICSANT website (unodc.org/icsant) has become the point of reference for practitioners around the world as it contains all available resources on the Convention, including its procedural history, status of adherence, analytical articles, a collection of national implementing legislation, capacity-building tools (including eLearning modules) and information on related UNODC technical and legislative assistance. Since its launch in September 2021, the website has received over 118,000 visits. It also hosts the database of ICSANT designated authorities pursuant to article 7(4). Furthermore, the website will host new databases that will be developed pursuant to the new ICSANT Secretariat-related functions under UNODC's purview.

Outcome 3: Enhanced policies, practices, and procedures to prevent, detect and respond to the threat of non-State actors, including terrorists, acquiring, possessing and/or using nuclear or other radioactive material and improved knowledge and understanding of the threat of radiological and nuclear terrorism and other criminal conduct involving such materials.

Output 3.1: The capacity of States parties to prevent, detect, and respond to acquisition, possession and/or use of nuclear or other radioactive material is strengthened

Activity 3.1.1: Regional workshops and table-top exercises to build the capacity of States parties in combating nuclear terrorism (UNOCT)

Building on the expertise and lessons learned from the 10 workshops and table-top exercises delivered by UNOCT/UNCCT, under the two previous Council Decisions, UNOCT/UNCCT will further organize three regional workshops and table-top exercises to strengthen cross-border collaboration and coordination mechanisms to prevent, prepare, interdict, and respond to radiological and nuclear (R/N) terrorism. Real case/scenario-based exercises will involve multiple country teams (e.g. intelligence, customs, regulatory, judiciary, health, policy sectors, etc.) and will enhance their capacity in areas such as detection, forensics, response, and mitigation of R/N terrorism and will assist national authorities to effectively implement ICSANT and enhance international cooperation, demonstrating the importance of being party to the Convention. They will also focus on information sharing and mutual legal assistance, demonstrating the operational value of ICSANT. As in the two previous Council Decisions, UNOCT/UNCCT will continue to deliver the workshops and table-top exercises in cooperation with relevant stakeholders including, the IAEA, INTERPOL, EU CBRN CoE Centres of Excellence, EU Joint Research Centre, UNICRI and WCO. The regional workshops and table-top exercises will build capacity in relevant areas identified by State parties, including, but not restricted to:

Combatting radiological and nuclear terrorism with a focus on detection to build capacity in the area of detection, focusing on identifying and applying good practices for radiological/nuclear material detection with information and instruments contributing to capacity-building in combating radiological and nuclear terrorism as it relates to border security management.

Combatting radiological and nuclear terrorism with a focus on forensics to build capacity in the area of detection forensics, focusing on demonstrating the importance of nuclear forensics, interagency coordination, contributing to capacity-building in combatting radiological and nuclear terrorism.

Combatting radiological and nuclear terrorism with a focus on response and mitigation to build capacity in the area of response and mitigation, focusing on the ability to respond in an effective, timely, and coordinated manner to terrorist incidents involving nuclear or other radioactive material as an essential element of a nuclear security framework.

Activity 3.1.2: Table-top exercises to build the capacity of States parties to ICSANT in combating nuclear terrorism (UNODC)

UNODC will conduct two table-top exercises for States parties to ICSANT to enhance the implementation of the operational aspects of the Convention. UNODC contributed substantially to six table-top exercises delivered under the two previous Council Decisions, in most instances as co-organizer along with UNOCT and other partners (e.g. Italy, Mongolia, Tajikistan and the USA). Additionally, UNODC has a long track record of delivering other table-top exercises and types of technical and operational capacity-building assistance to relevant stakeholders (including law enforcement, customs, frontline officers...) on detection and interdiction of, and response to, crimes involving nuclear or other radioactive material that would fall under the scope of ICSANT. This assistance has been provided jointly with the experts of UNODC's Border Management Branch, oftentimes in cooperation with the IAEA, INTERPOL, the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence, and other international experts, including EU experts. UNODC will conduct the proposed table-top exercises with these and additional partners, as appropriate.

Output 3.2. The knowledge and understanding of States parties of the threat of radiological and nuclear terrorism are improved

Activity 3.2.1: National in-person trainings on combatting R/N terrorism (UNOCT)

UNOCT/UNCCT will organize one targeted national training for a State party to enhance operational effectiveness of ICSANT by demonstrating practical applications of the Convention, through case studies and practical exercises, to relevant stakeholders including, inter-alia, customs, border guards, judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, regulatory bodies, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Justice, and Intelligence services. The training will enhance the capacities of States parties to apply ICSANT by also understanding the risk and the threat, enhancing preparedness, prevention, interdiction, and response capabilities, developing countermeasures, practicing incident response and enhancing international cooperation in case of an R/N incident. UNOCT/UNCCT will benefit from the extensive experience of its portfolio of trainings with over 1,700 officials trained.

UNOCT/UNCCT will work with the interested State parties identifying the suitable counter-terrorism training, as per their priorities and needs, including in the following areas:

National training - Basic Radiological and Nuclear Threats Course enabling personnel to effectively respond to a radiological and nuclear scene, providing recommendations for responders to be able to work in an environment that contains potentially hazardous radiological and nuclear agents.

National training - Intermediate Radiological and Nuclear Threats Course integrating relevant topics related to radiological and nuclear threats. This will include hands-on demonstrations and exercises, and culminate in realistic scenarios involving the detection and interdiction of radiological trafficking, identification of radiological or nuclear material in a crime scene setting, and recognition of radiological and nuclear hazards and evidence.

National training - Advanced Radiological and Nuclear Threats Course covering radiological and nuclear threats in greater detail with a particular emphasis on radiological dispersal devices and improvised nuclear devices.

National training - Radiological and Nuclear Countermeasures Course presenting the multi- agency approach that focuses on the development of countermeasures to radiological and nuclear threats, and on the joint response to radiological and nuclear incidents, by key national agencies, including law enforcement, customs, security agencies, first responders, intelligence, public health, regulatory authorities, industry, etc.

National training - Critical Infrastructure Protection Course focusing on sectors which can be attacked directly such as nuclear power plants, nuclear research reactors, locations containing radio sources, transportation nodes, as well sectors which can be targeted by non-State actors to obtain sensitive and controlled technologies.

Outcome 4: Enhanced national and international cooperation, including information exchange, within and among States parties in devising and adopting effective and practical measures to effectively implement the Convention.

Output 4.1: Information exchange as required by ICSANT is facilitated

Activity 4.1.1: Campaign to encourage States parties to ICSANT to designate and update a competent authority and liaison point pursuant to article 7(4) of the Convention (UNODC)

UNODC is in charge of receiving and disseminating notifications of designation of authorities made by States parties under article 7(4). The notifications received are posted on UNODC's ICSANT website.

UNODC will continue its campaign aimed at encouraging States already party to ICSANT to fulfil the obligation set forth in article 7(4), which requires States parties to inform the United Nations of their competent authorities and liaison points responsible for sending and receiving ICSANT-related information. The campaign undertaken during the second Council Decision fulfilled its objective successfully; as of 11 May 2026, it has led to 44 new designations and 18 updates of previous designations. Activities will include sending letters to relevant Permanent Missions requesting them to comply with their obligation under article 7(4); conducting bilateral meetings; following up on possible updates on previous designations; designing and implementing improvements with regard to the fulfilment of functions performed under article 7(4); and promoting article 7(4) in relevant fora.

Activity 4.1.2: Second meeting of ICSANT national competent authorities and liaison points (UNODC)

UNODC will organize and convene the second meeting of such competent authorities and liaison points in Vienna, Austria, in the third year of the project. Building on outcomes of the first meeting held in Vienna in 2026, it will include, *inter alia*, a mock coordination exercise and training of how to be an effective 7(4) liaison point. The meeting will target the national liaison points and other relevant national stakeholders.

Output 4.2: Best practices and lessons learned around joining and implementing ICSANT are utilized by target audiences at the regional level to increase effective implementation of ICSANT and nuclear security

Activity 4.2.1: Regional and sub-regional peer-to-peer workshops to share best practices and lessons learned on joining and implementing ICSANT (UNOCT)

UNOCT/UNCCT will organize three online regional and sub-regional peer-to-peer workshops for a small number of countries to share best practices and lessons learned on the effective implementation of ICSANT through practical cases, with a focus on legal, operational, and cooperative frameworks. The outcomes of the workshops will be reflected in an outcome document, including roadmaps and recommendations to enhance effective implementation with a view to improving policies, practices, and procedures in line with ICSANT provisions. The events will encourage the identification of regional champions and potentially include observers for States not yet parties to the Convention.